

Message Text

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16

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15

OMB-01 IO-12 RSR-01 /083 W
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P 220545 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0991

C O N F I D E N T I A L PHNOM PENH 3809

DEPT PASS TO USIA

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CB

SUBJECT: EXPULSION OF SYLVANA FOA

REF: STATE 075884

1. THE SITUATION WITH RESPECT TO MISS FOA IS CURRENTLY AS FOLLOWS. THE EXPULSION ORDER AGAINST HER WAS WITHDRAWN THIS PAST WEEK BY THE KHMER AUTHORITIES, INSOFAR AS WE ARE AWARE WITHOUT EXPLANATION. NEVERTHELESS, MISS FOA INFORMED THE PAO THAT SHE PLANNED A VACATION OUTSIDE CAMBODIA, AND OUR UNDERSTANDING IS THAT SHE IN FACT LEFT PHNOM PENH THE LATTER PART OF LAST WEEK. THIS WAS A VOLUNTARY DEPARTURE, NOT AN EXPULSION.

2. MISS FOA WAS IN FAIRLY CONSTANT TOUCH OVER THE PAST TWO WEEKS WITH THE PAO AND WITH THE VICE CONSUL. THE FORMER ASSURED HER REPEATEDLY THAT THE EMBASSY WAS IN NO WAY INVOLVED WITH THE DECISION OF THE KHMER AUTHORITIES TO EXPEL HER. WHEN INFORMED THAT SHE HAD BEEN INTIMIDATED BY THE POLICE ON ONE OCCASION FOLLOWING ISSUANCE OF THE EXPULSION ORDER, THE VICE CONSUL, ASSISTED BY THE POLITICAL OFFICER, INTERVENED WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY TO ASK THAT SHE BE PROTECTED FROM ANY FURTHER INTIMIDATION. AT THEIR REQUEST, THE
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EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE EXPULSION ORDER WAS EXTENDED FOR ABOUT A WEEK TO PERMIT HER TO GET HER AFFAIRS IN ORDER. LATER, AS INDICATED IN PARA ONE, THE EXPULSION ORDER WAS WITHDRAWN.

3. DCM ENDERS HAS NEVER HAD ANY CONTACT WITH THE KHMER AUTHORITIES CONCERNING MISS FOA.

4. MR. BERT OKULEY, A REPRESENTATIVE OF UPI, WAS RECEIVED BY THE AMBASSADOR AND THE PAO ON APRIL 19, HE BROUGHT WITH HIM A LETTER FROM MR. ROBERT E. PAGE, VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER OF UPI, HONG KONG, TO THE AMBASSADOR ASKING FOR INFORMATION ON THE EXPULSION ORDER AND EMBASSY INTERCESSION. THE AMBASSADOR EXPLAINED THAT HE DID NOT KNOW THE SPECIFIC CHARGES AGAINST MISS FOA BUT COMMENTED THAT HER REPORTING ON CAMBODIA OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS HAD FREQUENTLY BEEN SENSATIONALIST AND INACCURATE AND HAD GENERALLY BEEN UNSYMPATHETIC TO THE GKR AND ITS POLICIES. HE SAID HE ASSUMED THAT THE CHARACTER OF HER REPORTING PROBABLY CONSTITUTED THE GROUNDS FOR EXPULSION.

5. RESPECTING THE EMBASSY'S RELATIONS WITH MISS FOA, THE AMBASSADOR STATED FRANKLY THAT THEY HAD BEEN LESS THAN HARMONIOUS. HE HAD TAKEN PERSONAL EXCEPTION TO A TENDENTIOUS ARTICLE IN NEWSWEEK IN OCTOBER 1971 BASED ON HER COPY. SUBSEQUENTLY THERE WERE OTHER INSTANCES IN WHICH MISS FOA DISTORTED THE US ROLE AND ACTIVITIES IN CAMBODIA, EVEN THOUGH SHE CONTINUED TO HAVE REGULAR ACCESS TO THE PAO AND COULD HAVE CHECKED WITH HIM THE ACCURACY OF HER STORIES.

6. CONCERNING THE FUTURE, THE AMBASSADOR REMARKED THAT THE EXPULSION ORDER HAD APPARENTLY BEEN WITHDRAWN. HE NOTED THAT MISS FOA HAS BEEN STATIONED IN PHNOM PENH FOR ALMOST THREE YEARS. GIVEN HER APPARENTLY TROUBLED RELATIONS WITH THE KHMER AUTHORITIES, HE MADE THE PERSONAL SUGGESTION THAT THE INTERESTS OF MISS FOA AND THE UPI MIGHT BE BETTER SERVED IF SHE WERE TRANSFERRED TO ANOTHER JOB WITH UPI. HE POINTED OUT THAT KATE WEBB, THE PREDECESSOR OF
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MISS FOA, HAD REPORTED TELLINGLY ON THE KHMER SCENE

WHILE MAINTAINING HARMONIOUS RELATIONS WITH THE
KHMER AUTHORITIES AND WITH THE EMBASSY. THE PROBLEM
WITH MISS FOA MIGHT STEM IN PART FROM BOTH PERSONALITY
AND STRONG PERSONAL PREJUDICES. THE AMBASSADOR
ASKED MR. OKULEY TO CONVEY THESE VIEWS CANDIDLY
TO MR. PAGE IN RESPONSE TO HIS LETTER.

7. COMMENT. PLEASE USE WHATEVER PORTIONS OF THE
FOREGOING YOU CONSIDER HELPFUL IN DEALING WITH
RICHARD MOOSE OR IN HANDLING OTHER INQUIRIES.
MISS FOA TOLD THE PAO SHE WILL BE RETURNING TO
PHNOM PENH, BUT SOME JOURNALISTS SUSPECT THAT THE
EXPULSION ORDER WAS RESCINDED AS THE RESULT OF A
TACIT UNDERSTANDING WITH THE KHMER AUTHORITIES
THAT SHE WILL BE RE- ASSIGNED. WE DO NOT THINK WE
SHOULD ENGAGE IN SPECULATION CONCERNING HER FUTURE.
SWANK

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